



ANNUAL REPORT

2019 / 2020

meridian
COMMUNITY ■ HEALTH ■ ACTION



Acknowledgement of Country

Meridian acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land throughout Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. We pay our respects to the Elders of the Ngunnawal nation, the traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise that Meridian operates on their land. Meridian is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, and seas and their rich contribution to society. We are committed to working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as allies to strengthen community, improve health and wellbeing and take action to ensure their needs are being met and their voices heard.


Acknowledgement of LGBTIQ+ people and communities

We are proud to be a part of the LGBTIQ+ community. We see the rich diversity in our LGBTIQ+ communities, we honour it, and we celebrate it. We recognise that individuals within our LGBTIQ+ communities have multiple, distinct, and overlapping identities and experiences. They often come from intersecting communities. They have lived experience of disability, including psychosocial disability. They are also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from diverse cultural backgrounds, including those who have sought asylum.

We recognise the immense strength and resilience within our communities, and we thank LGBTIQ+ people and organisations for their continued and tireless work to build a stronger community. Because of their efforts, the ACT is becoming an increasingly inclusive, safe, and welcoming place where everyone can be their whole selves and diversity is celebrated.

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**“I APPRECIATE THE
WORK MERIDIAN
DOES. IT’S PROBABLY
THANKLESS BECAUSE
MANY IN THE
COMMUNITY ARE
MARGINALISED
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NOT ESPECIALLY
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THOSE LITTLE ACTS
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LIVES AND THE
SOCIAL FABRIC OF
OUR COMMUNITY.”**

(COUNSELLING CLIENT)





CEO/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year's annual report highlights a significant evolution in our identity as an organisation. At the annual general meeting in November 2019, our members voted to change our name. After almost four decades, the AIDS Action Council has re-launched under a new name: **Meridian**.

Meridian will continue the important work of the AIDS Action Council in terms of HIV prevention and treatment and supporting people living with and impacted by HIV throughout their lives. However, the nature of the HIV epidemic is changing. While transmission rates are down among gay and bisexual men, they are on the rise among other population groups, including migrants, refugees, and women.

By rebranding as Meridian, we've extended our reach to the communities we engage with and removed another barrier to HIV prevention. The new name also makes space for the many other programs and services we provide and all the people that could benefit from them.

While our rebranding is a highlight of the last 12 months, we've also been focusing on supporting our communities through the impacts of COVID-19. We are uniquely placed to respond to the pandemic. Our organisation was established in response to the AIDS epidemic that started in the 80s. After almost 40 years in operation, we know how to create and empower communities to respond to and support each other through a health crisis. Now as always, we are there alongside our communities, leading the community response, and taking action to ensure the health needs of our communities are met. ■

WE ARE MERIDIAN.

Elements of community based responses



Initiated by the community



Designed by the community



Implemented by
the community



Responsive to the evolving
needs of the community



Often enacted through
partnership with mainstream
service providers



Dependent on the
community for authority

The word **meridian** has many different meanings, and all of them help tell the story of what our organisation represents: **community**, **health**, and **action**. On the map, meridian lines show where we are in the world and give us a sense of place. In the body, vital energy travels along the meridian lines. And a meridian achievement is performance at its peak.

At its core, our new name communicates the importance of establishing and maintaining balance and always striving for improvement – physically, mentally, and socially. The new name also pays homage to Canberra's first and only community-owned, community-led social organisation for LGBTIQ+ communities – the Meridian Club. A friendly space that hosted many community events and activities, the Meridian Club lives on in spirit through our organisation's new identity.

Meridian is uniquely positioned in Canberra. We provide peer-led, community-controlled health services, and we have a long-established history of mobilising community-led responses and creating safe spaces where there is respect for all people, regardless of HIV status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Community-controlled organisations have a significant impact on improving the health and wellbeing of HIV-positive and LGBTIQ+ communities. Meridian services include counselling, referral and support, therapeutic groups, care coordination for people with complex needs, HIV and STI testing and treatment support services, one-on-one and group peer support, practical care and support, health promotion, education, social marketing, and community engagement. ■

2019-2020 SNAPSHOT

 **186**
MEMBERS

VOLUNTEER
HOURS
573 

551 
GCPS
PARTICIPANTS

 **EVENT**
PARTICIPANTS
2,410

139 COMMUNITY-BASED
SEXUAL
HEALTH TESTS

 **26**
HIV SELF-
TESTS SOLD

 **1,087**
HIV CLIENTS
OCCASIONS OF SERVICE

777
TRAINING
ATTENDEES 

292
TRAINING
HOURS DELIVERED 

 **185** HOURS OF
COVID-SPECIFIC
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

    
108 COMMUNITY WELLBEING
CHECKS DURING COVID

COUNSELLING
OCCASIONS OF SERVICE
1,862 

389
ONLINE
COUNSELLING
SESSIONS



67
PRIDE HUB
BOOKINGS

1,500 
SAFE SEX PACKS

SAFE INJECTING EQUIPMENT
     **1,760**



SOCIAL MEDIA STATS (ENGAGEMENT AND REACH)

343K
IMPRESSIONS

47,000
ENGAGEMENTS

2,900
MESSAGES VIA
SOCIAL MEDIA

46,400+
WEBSITE VISITS

AT MERIDIAN WE DELIVER QUALITY, SAFE, AND INCLUSIVE SERVICES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITIES ■



Meridian is approachable and welcoming 4.9/5



Meridian provides safe and inclusive services 4.9/5



Meridian is professional 4.9/5



Meridian service users are satisfied
with their interaction with us 4.9/5



Meridian meets the needs of our
service users 4.8/5

**“I FEEL HELD, SAFE, AND HEARD.
I CAN BE WHOEVER I WANT TO BE
AND THIS WILL BE VALIDATED.”**

(COUNSELLING CLIENT)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE

REDUCE NEW HIV TRANSMISSIONS

Meridian contributes to the reduction in the transmission and incidence of HIV. We are committed to health promotion and HIV prevention, testing, and treatment strategies.



Condoms

We continue to promote condom use as an important strategy to prevent HIV and other STI transmission, and we provide free condoms at our safe sex shop and community events.



PrEP

PrEP is a key HIV prevention strategy used by gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. We deliver PrEP education sessions for health practitioners and community members, and we assist our communities to access PrEP.



U=U

We promote the Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) campaign to raise awareness that an HIV-positive person with an undetectable viral load cannot transmit HIV to another person during sex.



STI and HIV testing

In partnership with the Canberra Sexual Health Centre, we run our monthly STI screening clinic (STRIP) for gay, bisexual, and queer men.



HIV education

In collaboration with the Australian National University, we continue to provide training for medical students about understanding the needs of people living with a chronic condition.

SEX WORKERS OUTREACH PROGRAM (SWOP)

SWOP continues to promote HIV and STI testing for Canberra's sex work community via community outreach and one-on-one in-reach activities. To further our reach, SWOP also launched a designated drop-in space that fosters skill sharing. The space connects independent sex workers and brothel-based sex workers, especially those that can feel isolated from the community.

The impact of COVID-19 on sex workers has been significant, and we have seen a huge spike in the need for support and referrals for sex workers. SWOP worked closely with the Scarlet Alliance and their member organisations to develop critical resources regarding access to emergency relief and financial support, COVID-19 restrictions on the industry, harm reduction advice, and COVID Safety Plan guidelines for return to work requirements. These resources were instrumental in keeping our Canberra community informed in this continuously changing landscape. ■

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO

IMPROVE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE, QUALITY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH AND IMPACTED BY HIV AND AIDS

Meridian is a crucial point of contact for people living with and impacted by HIV, including partners and families. We are a trusted source of counselling and peer-support/navigation services. We provide peer-based, professional, non-judgmental assessment, support, advocacy, and referral services, with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of these community members.



COUNSELLING

We provided counselling, peer navigation, and case management services to approximately 154 people living with or impacted by HIV.

GENESIS

Genesis supports gay and bisexual men coming to terms with living a long and healthy life with a new HIV diagnosis. Despite living in an era where information is readily available regarding undetectable viral loads and PrEP, issues relating to rejection, stigma, and self-worth remain challenging. Over the past 12 months, seven men have completed the program and reported a significant shift in their sense of confidence for the future.

The program also acts as a gateway to Meridian and our peer support, counselling, and case management services. Several Genesis participants continue to engage with Meridian outside of the program. ■

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE

CREATING A SAFE COMMUNITY WHERE THERE IS RESPECT FOR ALL PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF HIV STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR GENDER IDENTITY

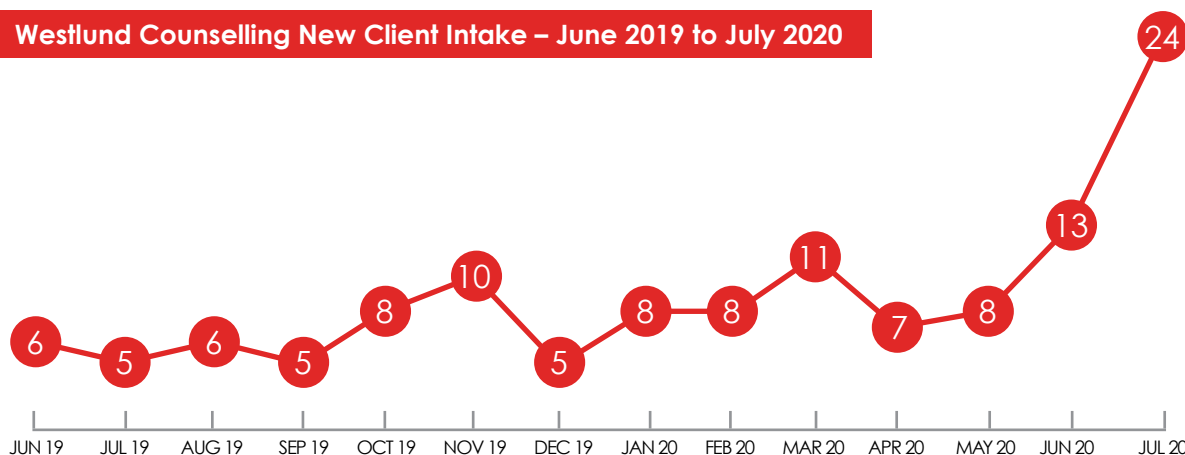
Meridian works across the community through multiple projects, platforms, and partnerships to bring our vision of a safer and more inclusive society to life. Through our programs and events, we foster genuine community connection and cohesion and create meaningful opportunities for whole-of-community engagement.

WESTLUND COUNSELLING

While working to build a safer and more inclusive society, we are simultaneously supporting LGBTIQ+ communities to build their collective resilience to the harmful effects of stigma, discrimination, and marginalisation. One of the ways we do this is by providing competent and professional counselling and mental health support services. Our counselling service – Westlund Counselling – is the only community and peer-based service provider in the ACT that offers safe, inclusive, and culturally appropriate counselling and therapeutic services that specifically target LGBTIQ+ communities.

Demand for our services has been steadily increasing over the past two and a half years. As a result of the impacts of COVID-19, however, we have seen an unprecedented increase this year. ■

Westlund Counselling New Client Intake – June 2019 to July 2020



THE EXCHANGE

The Exchange at Meridian is a peer-led, place-based client services hub that provides a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for LGBTIQ+ people and their families and allies to access therapeutic, clinical, and peer services. Bringing together a mix of clinical services to form a single, integrated service hub, The Exchange responds to the distinct, intersectional, and dynamic psychosocial needs of our LGBTIQ+ communities.

This innovative, community-based model has significantly improved access to affirmative and inclusive mental health services for LGBTIQ+ communities. Through the provision of informed, consensual, and evidence-based care delivered by a team of LGBTIQ+ competent clinicians, The Exchange supports positive health outcomes for LGBTIQ+ communities.

About the space

The space was custom designed by LGBTIQ+ people to create a safe, positive environment for LGBTIQ+ communities to access psychosocial care. It includes three counselling rooms and a multi-purpose clinic/treatment room with new medical facilities, including a phlebotomy chair, supply storage, and counter space with a sink.

Our services

The Exchange offers the following services:

- Westlund Counselling: Safe and inclusive strengths-based psychosocial support and gender-affirming counselling care to LGBTIQ+ communities. Counselling is partly funded by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate's Strengthening and Supporting LGBTIQ Communities program. The service is low cost or no cost to ensure its sustainability.
- Sexual Health Testing, Referral and Information Project (STRIP) clinics: Provided by Canberra Sexual Health Service in partnership with Meridian.
- PrEP Clinic: Provided by Canberra Sexual Health Centre in partnership with Meridian.
- The Friday Centre: Peer-navigation services for the trans community provided by A Gender Agenda.

Our service offerings expand and change to respond to the changing needs of our communities, bridge service gaps, and embrace new and innovative social and wellbeing options. In this way, we ensure we are offering the most effective services to LGBTIQ+ people and their families and allies.

The Exchange is underpinned and informed by a comprehensive Clinical Governance Framework that highlights opportunities for enhancing and strengthening services while simultaneously bridging service gaps to promote the best possible service-user experience.



Work with us

The Exchange welcomes expressions of interest from organisations, programs, and service providers that want to support LGBTIQ+ communities from a safe and peer-led space. On a negotiable fee-for-service basis, we provide training, peer-led support, rooms for hire, office support, and other support as negotiated. Terms and conditions apply.

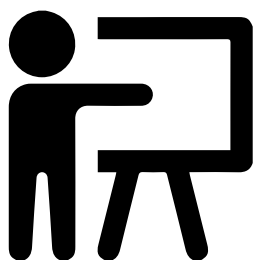
For more information, please contact Tom Skelton at contact@meridianact.org.au

THANK YOU TO THE SNOW FOUNDATION FOR THEIR KIND DONATION TO SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EXCHANGE.

SOBAR – NOT SO STRAIGHT UP

SoBar – Not So Straight Up aims to reduce alcohol-related harm within LGBTIQ+ communities in the ACT. SoBar increases awareness of the health and wellbeing impacts of alcohol, challenges the social norms around drinking behaviour and alcohol culture, and provides a range of relevant support services. SoBar was launched at CBR Fair Day 2019 by Minister for Health Rachel Stephen-Smith. The two-year project has been funded by ACT Health as part of the Healthy Canberra Grants Program.

Through SoBar, we're also conducting in-depth research that focuses on social drinking norms in Australia more broadly and how this translates within LGBTIQ+ communities in the ACT. The research also investigates reformed drinking habits and why community members have chosen to follow a sobriety pathway instead. This research will assist us in aiding policy development for LGBTIQ+ health needs, resource development for support services, and messaging around alcohol and how to harness its positive benefits while avoiding its pitfalls. ■



777

Training attendees

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Our education and training programs are at the heart of our mission to build a more inclusive society. Our training packages are designed to benefit the whole community, meaning we deliver training to workplaces, schools, and community groups. All our training packages cover essential topics to build awareness and understanding about groups in our community that experience stigma and discrimination, including LGBTIQ+ people, people living with HIV, and sex workers. As a peer-based organisation, we are uniquely placed to integrate lived experience with professional expertise. By sharing our knowledge, we are actively contributing to our communities, with the aim of making them safer and more inclusive. ■

"I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THAT TRAINING, IT WAS **RELEVANT, VERY **INFORMATIVE**, VERY **APPROPRIATE**, AND EXACTLY WHAT I NEED. THANK YOU!"** (TRAINING PARTICIPANT)

LGBTIQ+ AWARENESS/INCLUSIVITY TRAINING

Our LGBTIQ+ Awareness/Inclusivity [AI] Training programs seek to provide participants with the tools they need to embrace diversity. For organisations or individuals to become more inclusive, it is important to establish a foundation of body, gender, and sexual diversity knowledge and a 'human-to-human' connection between participants and trainers. There is no 'us' and 'them'.

Alongside bodies, gender, and sexuality, LGBTIQ+ [AI] training covers topics such as stigma and discrimination, the negative impacts associated with these experiences, and practical ways to mitigate these effects through inclusive practice tools and strategies.

From April 2020, Meridian began delivering training sessions online due to COVID-19. These have proved to be a great success. Not only has the online platform allowed us to maintain existing scheduling, but in some cases, it has increased the level of engagement due to improved accessibility. ■

OUR WORK IN AGEING AND AGED CARE 2019/2020

MERIDIAN IS A LEADER IN LGBTIQ+ INCLUSION IN THE AGEING AND AGED CARE SECTOR



COLLABORATION



NETWORKS



PARTICIPATION



TRAINING



CAPACITY BUILDING



SILVER RAINBOW – LGBTI AWARENESS

Training for the Aged Care Sector



18

SILVER RAINBOW
TRAINING SESSIONS

208

FRONTLINE AGED
CARE SECTOR INDIVIDUALS

20

AGED CARE SECTOR
PARTNERS REPRESENTED

As a result of the Silver Rainbow LGBTI Aged Care Awareness Training, Meridian has developed a recognised profile of expertise in the aged care sector in the ACT.



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE – AGED CARE SECTOR

Meridian nurtures a commitment to inclusive practice for LGBTIQ+ inclusion through its facilitation of the Aged Care Sector Community of Practice.



6

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
AGED CARE ORGANISATIONS
WERE REPRESENTED

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO AGED CARE HOSTED BY MERIDIAN ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL LGBTI HEALTH ALLIANCE



PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS



ROYAL COMMISSION
CANBERRA COMMUNITY FORUM



INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH
LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS

OTHER RELATED AGED CARE ACTIVITIES

- Advanced Care Planning Workshop – Co-facilitated by Meridian & Health Care Consumers Association.
- 'Dying to Know Day' – Co-facilitated by Meridian & Health Care Consumers Association.
- Canberra Together LGBTIQ Symposium – workshop on LGBTIQ ageing.
- Southern Regional Aged Care Forum (NSW) – delivered a presentation about Silver Rainbow.
- 3rd National Roundtable on LGBTI Ageing & Aged Care.
- 4th National LGBTI Ageing & Aged Care Conference.
- ACT Government: Age-friendly City Plan Consultation.
- Free & Equal: An Australian Conversation on Human Rights 2019.
- Advanced Care Planning and 'Dying to Know'. The successful delivery of Advanced Care Planning and 'Dying to Know' resulted in a strong working collaboration between Meridian and the Health Care Consumers Association.

PRIDE HUB

An exclusive and welcoming space for people from all LGBTIQ+ communities and intersections. Those with diverse backgrounds, disabilities and experiences are particularly encouraged to come and connect.



37 groups have used Pride Hub since it opened in August 2018, and **599** people have **participated** in events held at Pride Hub.



66% of groups using Pride Hub are **LGBTIQ+ led**, and 21% are trying to reach LGBTIQ+ people.

People choose Pride Hub because:

1

It's conveniently located.

2

It's a safe space that is welcoming of LGBTIQ+ people.

3

It's affordable.

4

The space is accessible.

5

Meridian is trusted by LGBTIQ+ people and communities.



Overall rating of Pride Hub 4.6/5



100% are likely or very likely to recommend Pride Hub

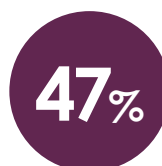
We asked Pride Hub users to tell us how Pride Hub benefits LGBTIQ+ communities, this is what they said:



Having access to Pride Hub supports our organisation/group to continue our activities.



Pride Hub helps us to reach and engage LGBTIQ+ people.



Pride Hub is a valuable resource for the LGBTIQ+ community.



Pride Hub provides a safe and inclusive space for LGBTIQ+ people.

EVENTS



CBR FAIR DAY

Thanks to the generosity and support of the ACT Government Office for LGBTIQ+ Affairs, our annual flagship event, CBR Fair Day, returned in November 2019. With entertainment provided by nearly 40 local and interstate performing artists, the event attracted over 2000 attendees from Canberra and the surrounding regions. Almost 50 community and business stalls lined the pathways of Gorman Arts Centre, which has been home to the event since 2016. ■



WORLD AIDS DAY

Around 30 people celebrated World AIDS Day at the National Arboretum Canberra's AIDS Garden of Reflection. Speakers on the day included Adam Stankevicius and Kevin Schamburg. Later that day, there was an event at the Street Theatre with a live reading of David Attfield's play *Clean* to an audience of around 40. ■



CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL

For the first time ever, we hosted the Candlelight Memorial fully online, and more than 60 participants joined the event. Local playwright David Attfield provided a topical reading of his play *Clean* alongside two local actors, Chris Baldock and Joel Horwood. The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations CEO Darryl O'Donnell and media advisor Nick Lucchinelli provided a pre-recorded interview reflecting on parallels between COVID-19 and the AIDS epidemic of the 80s and 90s. Melbourne musician and composer Ryan Sterling wrote and performed a moving instrumental piece. ■



WOMEN'S MORNING TEA

We continued the tradition of our annual morning tea to mark the National Day of Women Living with HIV. This event provides an opportunity to show our support for HIV-positive women and recognise the unique barriers and challenges they face in our society. The event also provides an opportunity for people and organisations who support these women to network and toast the achievements of the past year. ■



We have a reputation for expertise in LGBTIQ+ service delivery, co-design, consultation, and evaluation. Operating as a community-controlled, peer-based organisation is critical to our capability in this regard; it means we are a trusted partner that can bring diverse and often competing interests together to address challenges.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR

INVEST IN THE ORGANISATION TO ENSURE ONGOING SUSTAINABILITY

INVESTING IN OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers bring enormous energy and enthusiasm to our organisation. Without them, much of the work that we do would be impossible. They are dedicated and skilled individuals, whose diverse lived experience enriches our operations and projects.


NURTURING PARTNERSHIPS TO BETTER OUR COMMUNITIES

Strong working partnerships constitute the pinnacle of leadership and collaboration, and they are a central feature of how we work. We nurture relationships with partner organisations that share our values; together, we can ensure better outcomes for our communities. Our partnerships are also crucial for the continued and improved effectiveness and sustainability of the sector as a whole.



CANBERRA TOGETHER

A highlight of our partnership work this year was **the Canberra Together LGBTIQ+ Community Symposium**. We worked in partnership with The Equality Project, A Gender Agenda, the ACT Government Office for LGBTIQ+ Affairs, and Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centre to bring together Canberra's LGBTIQ+ organisations, groups, and community members at the inaugural Symposium. Held on 23-24 September 2019 at Ainslie Arts Centre in Braddon, the event celebrated respect and difference by bringing our communities together to connect with each other and discuss issues of importance. To paraphrase one of the opening plenary speakers, 'we were there to learn together and unlearn together.' Over the two days, the 200+ attendees heard from guest speakers and participated in panel events, presentations, and workshops. Canberra Together is a Meridian initiative, and Canberra Together 2 is planned for October 2021. ■



**“IT’S AWESOME
THAT MERIDIAN
EXISTS. BOTH
THE WIDER
COMMUNITY
AND THE LGBTIQ+
COMMUNITY
WOULD BE POORER
WITHOUT SUCH AN
ORGANISATION.”**

(COUNSELLING CLIENT)

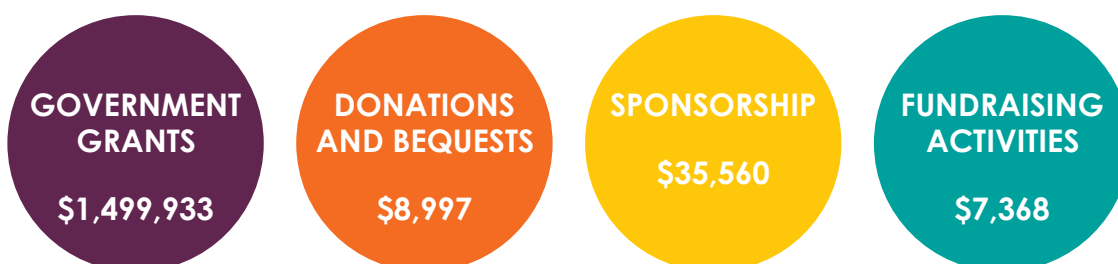


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Meridian realised a **surplus of \$49,500** for the 2019/2020 financial year after receiving **government assistance of \$225,292** from the JobKeeper and Cash Flow Boost programs. This resulted in a **net asset position of \$211,049** at 30 June 2020. This surplus compares with a surplus of \$20,270 for the 2018/2019 financial year. Excluding the COVID-19-related government assistance, **revenue for the 2019/2020 financial year increased by \$211,848** to a total of \$1,734,997. This increase resulted from a combination of factors, including increases in both government and non-government grants and fees for services. Expenditure for the year increased by \$407,910 compared to the previous year, which was mainly a result of increased employee costs to meet the performance obligations associated with increased grant funding. Meridian saw a drop in revenue from the sale of products and fee-for-service income in the last quarter of the year as a result of COVID-19 and had to delay the provision of some grant-funded services.

Meridian's continued objective is to increase its capacity and ability to support people living with and impacted by HIV and LGBTIQ+ people. To achieve this increase in capacity, we need to grow and develop new and existing services.

Excluding COVID-19-related assistance, approximately 86% of Meridian's income is from government grants, which totalled \$1,499,933 for the 2019/2020 financial year. Consistent with our strategic plan, the continuation of our programs has seen Meridian expand its footprint in Canberra, and more people living with and impacted by HIV are receiving information, support, education, and advocacy. Meridian received \$8,997 in donations and bequests as well as sponsorship of \$35,560 during 2019/2020. We also raised \$7,368 from fundraising activities. A substantial portion of these funds went directly to assisting clients. Over the past three years, donations, bequests, and fundraising activities have raised over \$57,000. This continued generosity has enabled Meridian to invest and further expand its range of services for people living with and impacted by HIV and LGBTIQ+ people. It has also allowed us to strengthen our financial position for future growth opportunities. ■



STRONG CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Board and the Executive Director have again returned a small surplus for the 19/20 financial year, demonstrating Meridian's ongoing financial sustainability. Funds have been diversified through fee-for-service counselling, our employee assistance program, and training and capacity building programs.

QIP ACCREDITATION

Meridian continues to work in an evolving space. Our current best practice is based primarily on a peer-led, community-based service delivery model. This allows Meridian to be responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, within the constraints of service policies and procedures.

This year Meridian worked toward and achieved accreditation against the QIC Health and Community Services Standards (the QIC Standards) by *Quality Innovation Performance Limited* (QIP) 7th Edition. The QIC Standards and QIC Standards Accreditation Program provide a thorough and wide-ranging review of organisational systems across multiple areas, including governance, corporate systems, service delivery, and external relationships. Meridian was recommended for accreditation on our first attempt with no rectification needed. This demonstrates our thorough processes, including clinical governance, sound management principles, legal requirements, strengthening of external partnerships, and positive outcomes.



MEASURING THE CONTRIBUTION AND IMPACT OF MERIDIAN'S WORK

In its third full year, our impact measurement system continues to prove itself as a worthy investment. Everyone who interacts with our organisation, from clients and volunteers to event and workshop participants, can now provide feedback about our services and programs. This information is available to our staff in real time, which allows us to continuously monitor and review our programs and services. This ensures that all the work we do is of the highest quality and meets the needs of our communities. ■

**“COUNSELLING HAS MADE ME
FEEL SAFE AND WANTED WITHIN
THE COMMUNITY AGAIN. I DON’T
KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE
WITHOUT THIS SERVICE. OTHER
COUNSELLING SERVICES COULD NOT
HAVE PROVIDED ME WITH THE CARE
OR KNOWLEDGE THAT THE MERIDIAN
COUNSELLING SERVICE HAS.” ■**

(COUNSELLING CLIENT)

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